

The Other Boyfriend by pterawaters

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Summary:

Jonathan doesn't know what he expected, going to look for Steve Harrington Halloween Night. It certainly wasn't getting drunk together and confessing more than a few secrets.

The Other Boyfriend

Author's Note:

This was written for day 6 of Stoncy Week, 2021, for the "drunken confessions" prompt.

Not beta read.

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Jonathan wasn't sure what his plan was when he left his house late on Halloween night after making sure Will was home safe and sleeping. He probably should have just left well enough alone, but Nancy had been so drunk, and Steve had been so upset. Maybe Will's dig the other day about him not having friends had gotten to him.

Jonathan didn't even make it all the way to Loch Nora before he found Steve's car parked along the side of the road, near the quarry. He found Steve himself sitting on the ground, looking out over the water, a bottle of booze to his lips.

"Hey." Jonathan sat down a good ten feet away, looking out over the water.

Steve made a noise of acknowledgment and took another drink.

"Got Nancy home safe."

Steve sighed. "Thanks, man." He looked over at Jonathan, his face only lit here and there by the light of his BMW's headlights shining over the water. Holding out the bottle, Steve asked, "Gonna make me keep drinking by myself?"

Normally, Jonathan would have been concerned about how he was going to drive home after drinking. Normally, Jonathan would have let Steve Harrington mope in peace. Normally, he wouldn't feel so responsible for breaking up two people, but he did, so he was here. He scooted a few feet closer and took the bottle—half empty.

Jonathan put it to his lips, trying not to think so hard about how Steve had just had his mouth pressed to this same glass rim. Jonathan took a few sips, wincing at the way it burned his throat, and handed the bottle back.

Steve took it, silently sipping at it for a couple minutes before handing it over again. "Shouldn't have pushed so hard for her to come to the party tonight," he said, worrying at the hem of his jacket sleeve with the opposite hand. "Everything's been so messed up lately. Should've known she was gonna take it out on me."

"What did she say?" Jonathan thought maybe it wasn't any of his business, but Steve had been the one to start talking. That probably meant he wanted to talk about it, maybe get some things off his chest. Didn't it?

Shrugging, Steve scoffed. He fidgeted for another moment before speaking. "I'm bullshit, our relationship is bullshit, she doesn't love me. It was pretty bad." He gave a melancholy chuckle.

Not sure what to say in response to that, Jonathan drank. There was a warmth in his fingers and toes that he figured had to be the alcohol. Whatever. Tonight was already a wash. He might as well ruin it more.

Then he was speaking before he made the decision to. "You love her, though, huh?" He passed the bottle over.

Taking the bottle, Steve laughed again before saying, "Oh, yeah. I love her so much it makes me sick sometimes." He shook his head, "But every now and then I wonder..." He trailed off, looking out over the water.

Feeling on the verge of something dangerous, like his mind was brushing up against something he'd been avoiding, Jonathan asked, "You wonder, what?"

Steve was silent for a few breaths before admitting, "I wonder if I only love her because of what we went through. You know? Nobody else gets it."

"They don't," Jonathan agreed. He took the bottle Steve handed him, wondering if he drank enough, if the tight feeling in his chest would fade away. "No one else has a brother who came back different.."

Scooting closer, Steve took the bottle and said, "See— see? I don't even have that. Nancy lost Barb and I have no idea what that's like." He shook his head again. "Nancy thinks we killed Barb. Her and me, like it was our fault she didn't go home when Nancy told her to. No wonder Nancy doesn't want to sleep with me again."

Jonathan frowned, confused. "You guys haven't...?"

"Not since that night," Steve replied. "At first I thought it was because she had a thing for you and I didn't want to push it and drive her away again."

"She doesn't," Jonathan insisted.

Steve laughed. "Like hell she doesn't. The only reason she's with me is because you didn't want her."

"I did." Jonathan admitted. "I do."

"Yeah, it's kind of obvious." Steve met Jonathan's eye. "I didn't tell her because I didn't want to lose her again. I think she's the only person who doesn't know."

The conversation felt vaguely like a trap, so Jonathan kept his mouth shut. Steve looked away.

"You get it. You understand, at least a little bit what it's been like for her. What she lost. I've tried and I've tried, but I'm not good enough."

Jonathan wasn't sure how to respond to that.

After a long, silent moment, Steve added, "I've thought about breaking up, about finding someone who actually wants me."

His throat dry, Jonathan took a sip from the bottle. It only made things worse, causing him to cough and splutter. When he was done, he wiped his mouth with the back of his hand and asked, "Why haven't you?"

Steve took the bottle, now mostly-empty, and took a long swallow. He tilted his head up to look at the dark, cloudy night sky. "Because I'd have to hide this big part of my life and I don't think I can do that. Not with someone I loved. Which only leaves Nancy and, well, you." Resting his elbows on his knees, Steve put his head between his hands. "Sometimes I think about that."

"About what?"

Still not looking up, Steve answered, "About you."

Not quite sure he could believe what he was hearing, Jonathan felt a dangerous ache in the back of his throat. "No, you don't."

Head down, Steve kept talking. "I think about taking you away from her, getting to you first. That way, if she leaves me, she doesn't have you there, waiting for her. Pretty stupid plan, huh?"

Mouth too dry to speak, Jonathan nodded. It was stupid. It wasn't like Jonathan was capable of— And they both knew Steve wasn't— Didn't they?

"Maybe it's just because Nancy hasn't wanted me, but sometimes it seems like you aren't just looking at her. You're looking at me, too. And I know I'm not supposed to want you looking at me like that, but it feels nice, you know? Like maybe if I hadn't screwed things up and goaded you into that fight, we could have been something." Steve sighed, "But I did, and you hate me, and you and Nancy are gonna be sickeningly good together. And I'll be alone."

Steve's voice sounded broken and his shoulder felt warm, almost pressed against Jonathan's. The night was dark, and Jonathan could barely see Steve's face, but he was feeling warm and impulsive. "Hey, Steve?"

He raised his head, eyes shiny in the light from his car. "Yeah?"

Jonathan leaned over and pressed his lips to Steve's, no idea what he was doing.

Steve made a murmur of surprise, but then he put his hands on either side of Jonathan's face. Instead of pushing him away, Steve pulled

Jonathan closer and kissed him back. Never having kissed someone before, Jonathan wasn't sure if this kiss was any good or not, but it felt nice.

Then Steve did something that made it wetter. His lips sliding against Steve's felt incredible. He got goose bumps all over his body and shivered. There was a warm knot in his stomach and he wasn't sure if it was there because of the kiss or because of the alcohol.

The alcohol!

Pulling back, Jonathan muttered, "Sorry. I shouldn't have—"

"Fuck 'shouldn't have,'" Steve said, pulling Jonathan close again. "That felt amazing."

"You've been drinking," Jonathan tried to lean away again, but Steve kissed his neck, making him lightheaded and dizzy.

"So have you."

"What about Nancy?"

"She doesn't want me like this," he said, pulling Jonathan with him as he laid back against the pebbled ground. Jonathan ended up all but straddling Steve's left leg, his hard on pressed against Steve's thigh.

"You're gonna sober up and hate yourself in the morning," Jonathan said, but he didn't try to pull away. Why shouldn't he have something that made him feel good? Nancy didn't want to be with Steve. She'd broken up with him. Why couldn't they just...?

"God, fuck," Steve muttered, getting one of his hands up the back of Jonathan's jacket. "I get it."

"Get what?" Jonathan asked, panting for breath before kissing Steve again.

"Why she wants you," Steve groaned as he wrapped a leg around Jonathan's and thrust hard against it. "The longer I look at you, the prettier you get."

For the next few moments, Jonathan felt outside himself, like he was watching from a distance while he fooled around with Steve Harrington on the ground next to the quarry. That couldn't be him down there, could it? People, much less Steve, didn't think he was "pretty." Nothing about this made sense. He couldn't do this. Not here. Not with Steve. Except he was doing it and no matter how much the back of his mind said he should stop and walk away, he still wasn't stopping.

Instead, his hands grasped at Steve's side, at his waist, at his leg. Jonathan felt like his body was calling the shots, which scared him. What if he pushed it too far, too fast? What if he broke some sort of rule he knew nothing about? What if they did this and Steve lashed out at him about it once he was sober?

At that thought, Jonathan made himself pull back. Steve's fragile ego in mind, Jonathan kissed him once more and told him, "We can't do this here. Not like this."

"Hmm," Steve said, following Jonathan up and kissing him again. "I bet the back seat of that car of yours is pretty spacious."

It was, though Jonathan had never given any thought to using it in that matter. "I meant—" Jonathan tried to say, enduring another kiss. "We should figure out if you and Nancy are really broken up before we do this."

Jonathan got to his feet and offered Steve a hand up. Steve took it, getting to his feet and crowding close to Jonathan until he was the only thing Jonathan could see. "But if we find out Nancy really did break up with me, you and she are gonna get together. Where does that leave me? Alone again."

Feeling more affectionate than usual. Jonathan caught Steve by his face and met his eyes. "Listen to me. I'm not gonna let that happen." He kissed Steve a bit clumsily. Wow, the alcohol was really starting to catch up to him now, wasn't it?

"How?" Steve stumbled when Jonathan moved away from him, toward their cars. "It's either gonna be me and her or you and her, and let's face it. It's gonna be you and her."

"What if it ends up being you and me?" Jonathan asked, opening the back passenger door of his car and dropping down into the seat. "We've got the whatsit—" He gestured toward where they'd been making out "—chemistry."

Giggling, Steve crawled over Jonathan, his knee digging into Jonathan's thigh. "I didn't do too bad in Chemistry. C-plus."

"Congratulations." It was getting pretty cold out, so once all their limbs were inside, Jonathan closed the door. He looked over, studying the way Steve tilted his head back and closed his eyes. Overcome with curiosity, Jonathan asked, "Have you ever had this kind of chemistry with someone before?"

Steve held up one finger, "Nancy," then another, "Laurie." He kept counting fingers as he added, "Becky, Sharon—"

Jonathan reached and put his hand over Steve's mouth. "I meant with another boy."

"Mm-nah," Steve hummed behind his hand, answering in the negative.

"Me neither." Jonathan thought for a moment, ignoring the way Steve kissed his palm. "It's so stupid, that we have to choose. Why can't we have both?"

Steve moved Jonathan's hand, asking, "Both girls and boys? I think there's some rock stars who get to have both."

Jonathan remembered that nervous, fluttering feeling he'd gotten in the pit of his stomach when he'd read about that sort of thing in a borrowed copy of Rolling Stone. It hadn't made sense to him then, but it was starting to now. Shaking his head he asked, "Why can't Nancy choose us both? You say she wants me, but I know she has feelings for you. What if we told her she didn't have to choose?"

"We both date her?" Steve asked, curling his fingers into the front of Jonathan's sweater. "Like shared custody?"

Jonathan nodded. "But you and me together, too. So if Nancy isn't ready yet, you and I could..."

Steve groaned. “Oh, I like the sound of that.” He shifted closer, pulling Jonathan into a hard, intense kiss. When he pulled back, breathing heavily, he said, “Or may be if you’re in the room with us, it’ll be different enough she won’t be reminded of what happened to Barb.”

Jonathan felt his heart stutter at the thought of being in the room with not just Nancy, but Steve, too. “Fuck,” he muttered, letting Steve pull him close and kiss him again.

“You like that idea?” Steve murmured against his lips, putting his hand between Jonathan’s legs and stroking up along his hard length. It felt like fireworks through Jonathan’s whole body, like a stomach-dropping fall that ended and started again as Steve stroked back down. Jonathan choked on his tongue, but Steve kissed his neck and whispered in his ear, “What do you want?”

Shaking his head, Jonathan said, “I don’t know.” Then he realized that wasn’t true. “Everything.”

Steve’s hand stopped moving, “What do you mean, everything?”

“You. Nancy.” Jonathan shrugged, a good portion of his brain occupied with how to get Steve to keep touching him. “Everything.” He pulled Steve into another kiss and tried to return the favor, putting his hand on Steve’s hard on. He pressed his lips to Steve’s neck and felt the pleased groan he gave.

“Shit, yeah, man. Everything,” Steve said with a gasp, pulling Jonathan close.

~*~

The knocking noise thundered through Jonathan’s head, making him wince and feel like maybe throwing up would be a good idea. He groaned and tried to open his eyes, but everything was too bright and they were kind of stuck together. One of the doors opened and cold air rushed into the car, making Jonathan shiver.

“There you two are!” Jonathan thought the voice was probably Nancy’s, but he was very disoriented, and it just as likely could have

been his mom's. "It's almost noon!"

Yeah, that sounded like his mom, alright.

Flashes of what had happened the night before, along with the voice groaning nearby, Jonathan's eyes sprang open and he sat up. The wave of dizziness and nausea that followed made him regret it, but at least now he could see the newcomer was in fact Nancy. His also-hung-over friend was Steve Harrington.

"What are you doing out here, anyway?" Nancy asked, resting her chin on the front seat and looking back at them. "You smell like a distillery."

With a frown that made him look like a disgruntled toddler, Steve told her, "You broke up with me. We were commiserating."

"What?"

Jonathan winced, fighting the urge to put his hands over his ears to block out some of the volume.

"I didn't break up with you!" At least, on her part, Nancy seemed to believe it.

Not really in control of his faculties, Jonathan muttered at Steve, "I told you we should've asked her first."

Her frown turning slightly more confused, like when Jonathan had first played her some of his favorite music, Nancy asked, "Since when are you two friends?"

Looking over, Jonathan met Steve's eye. Steve sucked a breath in through his teeth, squinted one eye, and told Nancy, "I don't know that you'd call us friends, exactly."

"What would you call it?"

"Yeah," Jonathan chimed in, nudging Steve with his foot. "What would *you* call it?"

Steve cleared his throat and sat up straighter, blinking a bit before he

looked over at Jonathan and grinned. "Fellow member of the Nancy-Wheeler-Owns-My-Stupid-Heart Club."

Jonathan was so relieved that Steve hadn't said anything about the making out and fooling around that it took him a moment to realize the implications. He turned his head just far enough to see that Nancy was staring at him with wide eyes. He should probably deny it, right? He should say that Steve was lying to embarrass him. His cheeks certainly felt warm enough to sell that last one as the truth.

But then Nancy asked, "Jonathan?" and her voice was so soft, so vulnerable. It made Jonathan feel like he was holding onto something delicate and he would be a monster to squash it or push it away.

So he sighed, met Nancy's eyes, and nodded.

Nancy's brows pinched together. She looked over at Steve, then back at Jonathan. "I... What do you want me to do with this information?"

Jonathan figured since Steve was her actual boyfriend, he should probably be the one to answer that question. He looked over, meeting Steve's eyes and nodding toward Nancy.

Steve nodded at him, then reached a hand out toward Nancy, setting it on her arm. "You really didn't mean to break up with me?"

Shaking her head, Nancy said, "No! I don't remember that at all. We were dancing, and I spilled some punch, and you brought me home."

"No, that...uh," Steve gave Jonathan a little smirk. "That was your other boyfriend. That was Jonathan."

Nancy looked at Jonathan, her eyebrows raised. "You...?"

Jonathan nodded. Feeling the need to head off certain questions at the pass, he told Nancy, "I didn't start drinking until after I found Steve here."

"So you were sober enough at the party to drive me home," Nancy said, filling in the gaps. After Jonathan nodded again, she asked Steve, "What did I say? That made you think I wanted to break up?"

Steve shook his head. "It doesn't matter. I don't want to..." He gave a frustrated sigh. "I don't even care that you don't love me, I just don't want to be alone."

Nancy made a disbelieving, wounded sort of noise before climbing half over the seat and putting her arms around Steve. Muffled somewhere in their hug, Jonathan heard Nancy say, "I don't want to break up."

"But you want Jonathan, too," Steve said, and Jonathan thought that maybe this would be the perfect time to leave the car, actually. Except it was his car, and Nancy was climbing all the way over the seat now. She sat between him and Steve, the corner of Jonathan's jacket caught under her thigh. "It's okay, Nance. I get it. Maybe he can make you happy."

Nancy opened her mouth, looking ready to argue. "I'm—"

"Please," Steve said, wrapping one of Nancy's hands in his. "You're not happy. You don't hide it that well. If bringing Jonathan in will help, well, I'm just about ready to try anything."

Remembering the feel of Steve's lips on his, Jonathan shivered. If he was remembering right, they'd already tried a few things the night before.

"What do you mean, bringing Jonathan in?" Nancy asked, looking over at him like he had any sort of answers here.

Shrugging, Jonathan said the only thing he could think of. "I promised Steve he wasn't going to end up alone."

"That still doesn't—" Nancy gave a frustrated huff. "Will someone please explain to me—"

Since Steve was beating around the bush, Jonathan just decided to blurt it all out. "I want to date both you and Steve. At the same time."

Nancy sat there with her mouth opening and closing for a long few seconds before turning to Steve, "Is that what you meant by my other boyfriend?"

"I mean, you've kind of had him on the line for a while now," Steve pointed out. "The only humane thing to do now is reel him all the way in."

"I'm not a fish."

"No, but you're a great catch!" Steve replied to him with a grin.

Jonathan shook his head and laughed. He was halfway into Steve's space, intent on meeting him with a kiss, when Jonathan realized Nancy was still sitting between them. He gave an awkward chuckle before backing off. "Sorry."

Steve murmured something in Nancy's ear that made her say, "No! Steve, I'm not—" He whispered something else that made Nancy give him an assessing sort of look. Both her cheeks were bright pink. She looked at Jonathan for a long second, during which he held his breath. Then she moved toward him, her hands reaching for his head.

Jonathan met her halfway. His lips were a little chapped from the night before, and his mouth was close to bone dry, but he didn't care, because Nancy was kissing him.

When Nancy broke the kiss, her eyes were wide. Jonathan got ready to hear that she'd made a mistake. She couldn't do this. Instead, she laughed. "Holy shit!"

"Is that a good—"

"It's a good thing," Steve told Jonathan, one arm around Nancy, the other reaching for him. "C'mere."

Letting Steve pull him in, Jonathan kissed him, too. It felt even better than it had the night before because this time they weren't going behind Nancy's back. She was here, watching them and giving another giddy laugh.

As they broke apart, Nancy asked, "So, who wants to hear about my plan to take down Hawkins Lab?"

Steve groaned and covered his face with his hands, but Jonathan was intrigued, so he said, "Sure. Okay."

Making a few more noises of protest, Steve finally agreed. “Fine. Let’s hear it.” When Nancy leaned against him as she started talking, his lips turned up in a soft smile. Steve looked over, meeting Jonathan’s eyes for a long second. Jonathan knew he needed to listen to Nancy, but he also needed to share a look of understanding with Steve. Steve reached around Nancy and folded one of his hands in Jonathan’s, understanding reached.

Author's Note:

Thanks for reading! I'd love to hear what you thought in the comments below!

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